

Spring 1-15-2013

# ENG 3001-007: Writing in the Professional Workplace

Tim Engles  
*Eastern Illinois University*

Follow this and additional works at: [http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english\\_syllabi\\_spring2013](http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2013)



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Engles, Tim, "ENG 3001-007: Writing in the Professional Workplace" (2013). *Spring 2013*. 69.  
[http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english\\_syllabi\\_spring2013/69](http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2013/69)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 2013 at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spring 2013 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact [tabruns@eiu.edu](mailto:tabruns@eiu.edu).

**English 3001: Advanced Composition**  
**“Writing in the Professional Workplace”**

Spring, 2013

Tues/Thurs, 3:30 – Coleman 3160

Instructor: Tim Engles

Office: CH 3831

Course listserv: 3001s13@lists.eiu.edu

Instructor's e-mail: tdengles@eiu.edu

Office hours: 2:00 – 3:00, Tues & Thurs,

and by appointment

Textbooks:

*Professional and Public Writing* (Coleman & Funk)

*Line by Line: How to Edit Your Own Writing* (Cook)

*Limbo: Blue-Collar Roots, White-Collar Dreams* (Lubrano)

*Working while Black: The Black Person's Guide to Success in the*

*White Workplace* (Johnson)

**COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

*read the following sections carefully! these words constitute our contract,  
and participation in this course will require your written agreement to them*

**Description and Goals:** The primary goal of this course is to help you improve your writing skills as you gather your forces toward a job in the sort of environment in which most of you will work after graduation—that is, a professional, “white-collar” environment (even if your collar won’t actually be white). In addition to getting your writing skills up to speed for a professional audience, this course will help you anticipate and deal with some of the key features of your future workplace. Because we have a smaller group than those in most EIU courses, your individual writing problems will receive close attention, both from me and from your peers.

More specifically, our goals include the refinement of skills in the following areas:

- **Clean, smart prose:** improve your ability to write clear, concise, and meaningful sentences, to compose organized, well-developed paragraphs, and to identify and address recurring grammatical or mechanical problems specific to your own writing (these vary from writer to writer). We will spend time talking about why a grammatically correct, clear, efficient style is key to your success in college and in professional life.
- **Constructing arguments:** improve your ability to construct substantive, well-written arguments. One of our aims is to learn to distinguish between mere “opinion” and a “reasoned argument” that is based on carefully constructed points, evidence, and so on. You will also be encouraged to push yourself toward new realizations while writing—good writing is not so much having something to say as it is discovering new thoughts and insights that would not have arisen if you had not started to write them down.
- **Critical reading:** improve your ability to read critically by questioning and evaluating what you read. Understanding the distinction between “opinion” and “reasoned argument” depends on your mastery of critical reading skills, which will enable you to discern and emulate the successful argumentative strategies of other writers. The better

reader you are, the better writer you can be. In order to be a better reader, you have to participate in what you are reading, actively deciphering the argument in all its parts, rather than passively receiving strings of words.

- **Minding your p's and q's:** misused words, missing commas, lack of subject/verb agreement, missing quotation marks, poorly incorporated quotations and inaccurate citations, misused semicolons . . . remember those bugaboos? Students sometimes complain that such “minor” mistakes in their papers are graded too heavily. Sorry, they’ll also be graded heavily in this course. However, there’s a good reason. Again, this course is meant to get your writing skills up to speed for professional life. *All of you are sure to write regularly during your careers*, and errors that students often consider “minor” actually stand out in professional life—they look sloppy and careless, and even worse, they make the *writer* look sloppy and careless. Thus, I will work with you to find and eliminate your own habitual errors, and we will conduct in-class workshops on the most common errors in advanced student writing.
- **Collaborative learning:** improve your ability to learn from others and to teach them about your own thinking, as well as what you know about writing. As in most professional settings, much of your success in this course will depend on the combined processes of producing several drafts of your writing and working with others, via peer critiques. You will also practice forming honest, thorough, and constructive commentary on your peers' writing, a process that will in turn improve your own writing skills.
- **Professional life:** learn about some of the more subtle aspects of how people interact and collaborate in the professional workplace. We will study significant factors that influence success in professional life, including such matters as race, class, and gender.

**Grades:** Your final grade will be determined as follows—

- 15% Essay on the kinds of writing you will do in your career
- 15% An example of public writing that you could do in the future regarding the effects of race, class, or gender and your future career
- 15% Presentation on topic of public writing assignment, including PowerPoint
- 10% Two peer critiques of your classmates’ writings
- 20% Sample job-seeking documents & a written self-critique of them
- 15% Quizzes, other writings, class participation (including attendance)
- 10% Final quiz (on content of daily grammar lessons and writing workshops)

**Regarding late papers:** Papers and other assignments will be graded on a 100-point scale, and late papers will be penalized fifteen points for each day they are late, beginning one hour after the time of day at which they are due. You will be submitting some assignments as email attachments, so **make sure that you’ve actually attached your assignment**. You should double-check by looking in your Sent folder at the message that you sent for the attached paper. **Sending an email message with no paper attached will result in the usual late penalties.**

**Regarding tardiness:** This is a small class, so late arrivals are disruptive—if for some bizarre reason you wish to get on my bad side, you can easily do so by developing the habit of arriving late for class. **If you will not be able to arrive on time for this class because of other commitments, drop it and take another section.** You are responsible for all assignments,

whether you attend class or not. Consider getting the phone number or email of one or two other students in class so that if you must be absent, you can find out about missed assignments before you come to class.

**E-mail Activity:** Enrollment in this class requires use of your EIU e-mail account, and you must check it frequently for messages pertaining to the course (that is, several times per week, at least). We will use our course listserv (or “e-mail discussion list”) for announcements and assignments. E-mail is also the quickest, easiest way to reach me if I am not in my office, and I welcome any and all e-mailed questions and comments.

Using e-mail is crucial for this course—if you do not send me an introductory e-mail message (tdengles@eiu.edu) by Friday, January 11 at 3:00 p.m., I will assume that you have chosen against fully participating in the course, and I will therefore drop you. In that message, (1) tell me which course you’re in (English 3001); (2) describe yourself in whatever way you choose, including your major and career aspirations; (3) write a statement to the effect that you have read and agree with (or perhaps in part disagree with, which is fine, if you explain why) these course policies and requirements; and (4) as with all emails you send to instructors, “sign” it by adding your name at the end of the message.

Sending me this message will also constitute your “signature” of our course contract, that is, these policies and procedures that you are reading. I will then use your email address to subscribe you to the class listserv (you don’t have to subscribe to it yourself).

**Regarding the Writing Center:** Tutorial services are free at the English Department’s Writing Center, and students may drop in or schedule appointments during working hours (Room 3110 of Coleman Hall, <http://www.eiu.edu/~writing>). If you are aware of chronic problems with your writing, I strongly recommend that you make use of this service. While I will pay close attention to each student’s particular writing problems, I may advise some students to seek additional help at the Writing Center.

**Classroom Environment:** In class, I expect all of you to participate in discussions (class participation will be figured into your final grade) and to attend regularly. The best way to demonstrate that you are an active, engaged, and interested reader and writer is by contributing regularly to class discussions, and by paying close, respectful attention to what everyone else has to say. If you have questions, no matter how simple or complicated, go ahead and ask me, either in class or via e-mail—chances are that other people have the same question. Again, sensitive issues sometimes arise within a course of this sort, so we must respect the opinions of others; it will help if we try to respond to ideas, rather than to the particular person stating them. I do not plan to lecture in this class. You will learn better and more if we all contribute together to a positive, challenging, interesting learning environment.

In the interests of keeping everyone in class undistracted and focused, ***please do not read outside materials, chew gum, or eat food in class (drinking beverages is okay), and do not use a computer in class.*** Also, if you have a cell phone, ***be sure to silence it ahead of time, and do not check or write text messages during class.*** If you happen to be expecting an important or emergency call or text, be sure to let me know before class begins. Finally, please refrain from

“packing up” during the last few minutes of class; I will signal when the discussion is finished, and I promise to end each class by the time the period is over.

**Attendance Policy:** I will take attendance, and I expect you to attend class every day, on time, and prepared to discuss the material listed for that day on the “Daily Schedule.” Students who do not bring a copy of the assigned reading with them may be marked absent for that day. **If you have more than three absences this semester, your course grade will drop a full letter grade for each absence beyond three.** Also, missing a scheduled individual conference without giving me prior notification will result in the automatic lowering of your grade for the final essay by ten points. If you have to reschedule your conference, call or write to me via e-mail in advance; I will do the same if I have to reschedule.

**Academic Honesty:** I expect you to act honestly and do your own work in this class, and so does Eastern Illinois University. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the English Department’s policy on plagiarism: “Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—‘The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s original work’ (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.”

## English 3001 Daily Schedule Spring, 2013

This schedule may be subject to change; BE SURE to bring the appropriate book or books to class if a reading assignment is listed for that day; students who show up without a copy of the day's reading assignment may be marked absent

### WRITING ON THE JOB

T JAN 8 Introduction to the course and to each other

- Discussion: "Writing Effective Email Messages in the Workplace" (handout)

R JAN 10 Read before class, and also bring the book to class: *Professional and Public Writing*, Chapter 1, pages 1-11

F JAN 11 3 p.m. **Deadline** for sending Dr. Engles (tdengles@eiu.edu) the email described above on Pages 2 and 3

T JAN 15 *Professional and Public Writing*, Second half of Chapter 1

R JAN 17 *Professional and Public Writing*, Chapter 2

F JAN 18 Email Assignment One due by 5 p.m.

M JAN 21 Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday – No Classes

T JAN 22 *Professional and Public Writing*, Chapter 3, 41-63; also, discussion of Paper 1 Guidelines – Writing and Your Future Career

R JAN 24 Writing Workshop: The Key Elements of a Solid Essay

T JAN 29 Writing Workshop: Using Outside Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism

R JAN 31 Writing Workshop: Five Simple Rules for Achieving Comma Glory

T FEB 5 In-class peer review of Paper 1: bring a printed rough draft of your paper to class

W FEB 6 Paper 1 due via email attachment to tdengles@eiu.edu by 5 p.m.

**PUBLIC WRITING, PUBLIC SPEAKING:  
RACE, CLASS AND GENDER ON THE JOB**

- R FEB 7 Readings for today: "The Changing Face of Gender Issues in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workplace," Richard E. Thompson; "Does the Glass Ceiling Still Exist?," Kate Lorenz; "Too Nice to Land a Job," Scott Jaschik
- T FEB 12 "Gender Bias in Education," Amanda Chapman; "Ask for a Raise? Most Women Hesitate," Jennifer Ludden; "Language, Sex, and Power: Women and Men in the Workplace" (An interview with author Deborah Tannen by Richard Koonce)
- R FEB 14 *Limbo*, Introduction and Chapter 1; Email 2 due by 10 p.m. tonight
- F FEB 15 Abraham Lincoln's Birthday – No Classes
- T FEB 19 *Limbo*, Chapter 6
- R FEB 21 *Working While Black*, Preface, Introduction and Chapter 1
- T FEB 26 *Professional and Public Writing*, Chapter 5, 155-76; Discuss Paper 2 Guidelines
- R FEB 28 *Working While Black*, Chapter 3, pages 41-55 & Chapters 4 and 6; discuss Presentation Guidelines; sign-up for the date of your presentation
- T MAR 5 NO CLASS – Individual conferences on Paper Two: bring two printed copies of a rough draft of Paper 2 to your conference
- R MAR 7 NO CLASS – Individual conferences on Paper Two: bring two printed copies of a rough draft of Paper 2 to your conference
- MARCH 11 – 15 SPRING BREAK!
- T MAR 19 Writing Workshop: Passive Versus Active Voice; reading for today: Presentation Guidelines (the six-page handout that you received in class on FEB 28)
- R MAR 21 Writing Workshop—Constructing Better Sentences; read before class: *Line by Line*, "Loose, Baggy Sentences" (Chapter 1)
- F MAR 22 Paper 2 due via email attachment to [tdengles@eiu.edu](mailto:tdengles@eiu.edu) by 5 p.m.
- T MAR 26 Presentations
- R MAR 28 Presentations
- T APR 2 Presentations
- R APR 4 Presentations

## WRITING TO GET A JOB

T APR 9 Readings for today: Angie Olson and Allen Brizee, “What Is a Good Cover Letter?” and “What Is a Good Résumé?”; Michael Leddy, “How to Email a Professor”; Discussion of Final Project Guidelines

R APR 11 Reading for today: Stewart and Dustin, “Exploring the Handshake in Employment Interviews”

T APR 16 Writing Workshop—Constructing Better Sentences; read before class: *Line by Line*, “Faulty Connections” (Chapter 2)

R APR 18 No Class – Work on your Final Project! Dr. Engles will be in his office during our class period, and during his regular office hours, to meet with any students who would like to discuss their projects.

T APR 23 In-class peer review: bring printed drafts of your materials to class

R APR 25 In-class Quiz: Grammar Lessons, Commas, Active Voice, Loose, Baggy Sentences, & Constructing Better Sentences  
And... tearful, heartfelt farewells

F APR 26 Project due to [tdengles@eiu.edu](mailto:tdengles@eiu.edu) by 5 p.m.

We will not meet during Final Exam Week